

THE DESTERRADO

THE DESTERRADO

BY

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AUTHOR OF "LAYS OF GOA," "A GOAN
FIDDLER," "PRIMEIROS VERSOS," ETC.

CHAPMAN
AND HALL[®]



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TO THE MEMORY
OF
SIR EDMUND GOSSE

NOTE

It is due to the critical discrimination of my son Philip that this book has not more defects. If it has any merits, some of them are no less due to his valuable suggestions. And he allows me to record these facts only because of the joy it will give to an affectionate father.

J. F.

From the Author's Poem, "Nunca Pensei"

Por obra só ambição fui dominado,
P'ra mim foi sempre um dever sagrado
Louvar a pátria—não louvei?
Eis a razão que ando desterrado—
Nunca pensei, nunca pensei.

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THE SACRIFICE

THE DESTERRADO

THE VICTIM

Go slower, said I to the driver,
And looked on the scenes I past.
How little I dreamed, dear hamlet,
That I looked my last!

They dragged me out like a felon
In sight of all I held dear;
They fell on me without mercy
Though friends were near

Yea, so by Fate it was written—
To save me not a man tried,
All quiet He looked on—O Master!—
Only the hills sighed!

Yet, as I fled, did I pluck this,
This twig of the mango-tree,
That every house I come to
It blest might be

THE DESTERRADO

THE VICTIM

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And looked on the scenes I past :
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This twig of the mango-tree,
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It blest might be

The Desterrado

VIA SACRA

WHEN Fate, for serving worthless folk,
Covered me with disgrace,
And some old women fell to crying
At seeing my blood-stained face,

A voice across the forty years
Cried out in accents deep,
" Ye daughters of Jerusalem,
Weep not over me, but weep

For yourselves and for your children ! "
And right before me stood
The churchyard with each cross, the folk,
And the choir master good.

Thus at the Via Sacra had
He cried in tones benign,
And touched the heart of every one,
Had touched all hearts but mine

Nay, I had mocked him, I alone
Of all the pious throng ;
And, doubtless, in this wise, at last
Had Time avenged the wrong !

FAREWELL

FAREWELL ! but not as men might take it,
For thou and I are one
As much as flesh and blood can make it ;
And naught beneath the sun,
Till all my sands have run,
Dear hamlet mine, us two shall sever—
For ever we are one, for ever !

The Desterrado

ON AN OLD GRAVE

To many thou wert dear—
Who now remembers thee ?
Only I, with many a tear,
Only I remember thee ;
Yea bitter tears I shed—
Brother, when I am dead,
Who will remember thee ?

The Sacrifice

THE FLIGHT

Like a thief I slunk away.

“ Are you leaving us ? ”

Asked the palm-trees, bending low.

“ He’s deceiving us ! ”

Cried the birds, “ We too will go, ” —

And they followed me.

I heeded not but hung my head :

My heart was dead in me ,

The world I loved was dead ,

The rest was naught to me —

And like a thief I fled.

On the way I sold the house ,

For a bagatelle

“ Judas ! Judas ! ” croaked the crows ,

“ Sure to burn in hell ! ”

From his grave my father rose ,

Rose and followed me !

I smote my breast , my dead heart bled

And made the sign on me .

Strange worlds before me spread ,

My world was lost to me —

And like a Cain I fled.

The Desterrado

ACROSS THE GHATS

GREAT hills upon great hills, you say,
On every side they rise?
One little hill 'tis all I see—
O friend, cover mine eyes.

And houses scattered far and wide
On every hill, you say?
One little house 'tis all I see—
Now close mine eyes, I pray.

And to and fro the folks they go?
One man alone I see,
A dead man too, he digs a grave—
Dear friend, pray bury me!

A Voice
Buried you'll never be!

The Sacrifice

THE VILLAGE

WHEN last I passed this way,
(How very long ago ?
It seems but yesterday,
So well the facts I know)
Some maidens at the well
Merrily they were singing,
And many a temple bell
Noisily it was ringing ;
That dog was barking furious
(Now it seems to pity me)
And children staring curious
And saying, " A strange saib he ! "

It all had seemed so sweet and funny,
Had come as comes to children honey,
Had come and cooled my fevered brain—
Lord, be as merciful again !

A Voice

Thou prayest in vain !

The Desterrado

THE PEASANT

How good a thing is toil !
Sweet after toil is bread,
And best to plough the soil
Ere the sun is overhead,
As does that peasant now. . . .
So many angels tried
To watch him at the plough,
The heavens they opened wide.
The man was heard to say:
" Another furrow, son,
And your day's work is done ;
Then off you go to play,
I will go rest a while :
Come, one more furrow, come." "
It made the angels smile—
The creature it was dumb !
I wept in agony,
In vain I wept, in vain ;
They would not look on me,
Naught cared they for my pain.
To the good peasant then
I turned, " O blest of men,
Pray let me hold the plough ;
Sure it will do me good,
A sweat upon my brow ;
Well after work comes food,

The Sacrifice

And work or food to share,
To share it with another,
Great joy it is and rare !
Do try it, my good brother,
And let me hold the plough.”
These words scarce had I said,
One moment, at my brow,
Stared he—then shranked and fled !

The Desterrado

JOHN CLARE

NONE knew it, yet the moss-thatched cot,
To thee, was all in all.

I knew full well, John Clare.
The kindly lord he too knew not;

He put thee in a hall—

It deepened thy despair:

John Clare, I felt for thee
And many a tear let fall.

Now comes my turn, John Clare,—
I have nor cot nor hall:

John Clare, pray thou for me.

A Vene

None will pray for thee!

The Sacrifice

ALL SOULS' DAY

The bells toll for the dead !
The dead lie quiet, they say,
As quiet as babes in bed—
Death, take me then away :
Alive no peace have I,
If dead all quiet I'll lie.

A Voice
You'll never die !

UNDER THE SKIES

UNDER THE SKIES

Under the Skies

THE FOREST BIRD

BIRD of the forest, now thou art free,
Where wilt thou go ?
Wilt thou not fly to the blue mountains
Where cool winds blow,
And sing to the great folk there ?

Why should I leave the pleasant plains ?
Content I could dwell
In this quiet village, by the stream,
Temple or well,
And sing to the small folk here.

The Desterrado

SALISBURY PARK *(Poona, India)

When the first time I
Crossed Salisbury Park,
There was nobody there,
But, alone in the sky
Was singing, a lark :
We two from the world were apart—
The bird in the sky,
Upon the earth I—
And a strange joy kept playing in my heart !

* So called in memory of the Superintendent of the Seventh Day Adventist Mission. The place is more of a valley than a park, being treeless and, for the most part, uncultivated.

Under the Skies

To the Sun

GOOD-MORNING, dear Sun !
It makes me so glad
To see thy glad face.
All the night I was sad,
But the light of thy face
It makes me quite glad—
What a blessing thou art !
Thou givest us joy,
Thou givest us life,
Poor worms on this earth
For ever at strife—
There's naught we can give thee ;
But may this, in thy praise,
From the depths of my heart
I send by thy rays,
May it please thee, dear Sun !—
What a blessing thou art !

The Desterrado

BIRDS AND I

At sunrise o'er the hills
As I go a-whistling gay,
The birds from many a tree,
"Good-morning, poet!" they say;
It thrills me so, I, I
Can make them no reply,
But in my heart I bless them.

At sunset I return
A-thinking all the way,
And, to the birds about,
"Good-night, dear birds!" I say.
If none of them replies
For the sleep in their eyes,
Sure in their hearts they bless me.

Under the Skies

ONE MORN IN JULY

One morn in July,
In a garden all fair,
Quiet seated was I
Enjoying the cool air.
All the plants were in flower,
With many a gay bower—
It is so in July—
And all o'er *trring, trring, trring*—
So some humming birds sing
And from flower to flower fly,
Or it was *tweet, tweet, tweet*,
Of the tailor birds sweet—
Dear to me is their cry !
I had sat some time,
Perhaps for an hour,
With my head full of rhyme
Of bird and of flower,
When, I know not why,
Tears rushed to mine eye,
 All of a sudden
Tears rushed to mine eye !

The Desterrado

How THE CORN GROWS

One autumn morn
I chanced to cross
A field of corn;
And there it was,
That blessed morn,
To sinful me
The grace was given
On earth to see
The ways of Heaven:
I saw a bird,
I heard a voice,
Ne'er saw, ne'er heard.
I did rejoice,
Yes, felt a bliss,
Yet felt a dread
At sight of this,
And what I said
I know not well,
For, strange to tell,
I instantly
Was on my knee.
The bird saw too,
Yet did not stir;
And, "Who are you
To ask me, sir?"
It said, and I
Did thus reply,

Under the Skies

Grown bolder now,
I know not how :
“ An untaught poet
Of trees and birds,
Whom no man knoweth,
And, wanting words,
But dreams and sings
Of simple things ”—
“ Peace ! all Heaven knoweth ;
From Heaven come I :
Come, simple poet.”
And, drawing nigh,
I heard it say,
That blessed day,
To an ear of corn,
A tiny ear
That just was born .
“ Grow quick, my dear !
There’s dearth and death
On every hand,
In every breath
Upon this land—
Grow quick, my dear ! ”
Then was revealed
At every ear,
Throughout the field,
A bird, and clear
A voice, “ Spare, spare ! ”
Was it my prayer
That blessed morn
While I did cross
The field of corn ?

The Desterrado

Perchance it was :
To sinful me
Such grace was given—
On earth to see
The ways of Heaven !

THE CHILLI AND THE ONION

SAYS the chilli to the onion
That grows nigh,
“ Ah, my neighbour, what a pity,
When you die,
No dear parent, brother, sister
Mourns your lot :
Plucked no sooner from the garden
Than forgot ”

“ Not precisely so,” the onion
Makes reply ;
“ You’ll know better all about it
By and by .
Truly men do pluck me, press me,
Cut me deep—
Curse the cut-throats, don’t I always
Make them weep ! ”

The Desterrado

A LITTLE FRIEND'S VISIT

GOOD-MORNING, sir!—good-morning, sir!
'Tis I, *tweet! tweet!*—he does not stir!
Are not you—surely you're the poet?
But, bless me, how was one to know it?
So fond of looking at the skies,
Or sitting lone with half-shut eyes!
I thank you, poet; you praise my feet,
You praise my song, you call me sweet.
Dear Ellen told me so yesterday;
Ellen's my friend, dear Ellen Gray.
Says Ellen, "Come, come, mother dear,
Come see, the little lady's here;
Look, mammy,—steady, now, dear, steady!
Look how she stands, just like a lady.
Come take my lesson, little *tweet*;
Come teach me this, my pretty *Sweet*."
Says mammy, "Mind your lesson, Miss.
The *little lady*, ay,—*bus! bus!*
Dear, what a cheeky bird it is!
Do make your lesson, Ellen dear;
I'll blow her up an she come near."
The mother's such a nuisance—blow her!
But Ellen's kind, I call her *queen*;
She calls me *lady*—don't you know her?
The bonniest lass that ever was seen—
Why don't you woo her?—"Stop, my bird!
You're foolish, dear; who ever heard

Under the Skies

Of such a thing, a thing like this—
An old man wooing a little Miss?—
How foolish!—it will never do.'—
At this away the bird it flew;
What did I do? what did I say?
At once the bird it flew away."

The Desterrado

THE MUSE'S SONG

Much reading was tiresome, I found,
And, flinging the book to the ground,
"Now give me," I said to the Muse,—
"And I prithee, dear Muse, don't refuse—
Give me something that's fit to be sung,
Pretty or funny to suit my tongue."

And the Muse thus began—

"There's maid Marianne,
She's singing and milking the cow—
And what is there prettier now?—

Sing *that* if you can;

Or look at Suzanne,
How the crows they are driving her mad—
Could anything funnier be had?—

Sing *that* if you can."—

And away the Muse ran,
Herself making the song,
Very sweet—and not long!

Under the Skies

CASHews

A small green hill, an evenfall,
And, swaying upon a thorn,
A bulbul—to its mate doth call .

Delighted I look on —
How soft and tranquil all !

Who comes ?—A woman young and fair,
A child against her hip ,
Sweet mogras round the knot of hair,
A lilt upon her lip —
How sweet is all the air !

Upon the ground the child she lays
And plucks the cashews red .
Some farmer's wife, but the sun's rays
A glamour round her shed.—
How blest must be her days ! —

The Desterrado

THE CHILD OF LIGHT

SLOW, one by one, the stars of night
They mount and shine athwart the sky
And fade away ;
Quiet, in the dark, the child of light
He works and waits, till night go by,
To greet glad day !

MEMORIES

Memories

THE PROPHET I

A man there was, had travelled wide,
Would come and sit all day
In our *balkāo*, and tell in pride
Of countries far away.

And, if he caught me, as oft he did,
Coming from stream or hill,
He'd shake his head, would shake his head
And say, "Do what you will,

My friend, this child of yours,
If once he leave his home,
His home and all he will forget,
And only love to roam."

Right well remember I his words,
And how my sire he'd sigh.
The prophet I were he living now,
He'd find his words a lie.

I've travelled far, I've travelled wide,
The Ghats and Ganges seen,
But e'er my village hills and streams
Most dear to me have been.

The Desterrado

THE BULBULS' NEST

THE path of life 'tis full of thoms—
So hard a fate is ours ;
Yet, say, the first few feet is not
The path strewn all with flowers,
Strewn all with flowers ?

And naught that comes in after days
The memory of the joy
We had of each and every flower,
Indeed, can e'er destroy,
Can e'er destroy.

And one such flower, among the rest,
When, past a summer shower,
A cool breeze blows, remember I
Each day at luncheon hour,
At luncheon hour.

The shower is gone, and drops of rain
Are glist'ning in the sun ;
The mudday meal is also done,
The hour being nearly one,
Being nearly one

In the *bakão* there sits a man,
A boy upon his knee .
They watch two bulbuls build a nest
Upon the mango tree,
The mango tree.

Memories

It stands so small—the mango tree—
And in the garden near,
The birds, when hatched, will sure be theirs,
The birds they love so dear,
They love so dear.

The boy he laughs or weeps for joy,
And sire and son begin
To make a cage, a tiny cage,
To keep the birdies in,
The birdies in.

The picture may, to *thee*, seem dull ;
Not so seems it to *me*.
Ah, what a world would I not give
Again that child to be,
That child to be !

The Desterrado

DREAMS IN CHILDHOOD

DEAR mother, now in heaven,
A dreamy child she thought me,
But bless my happy childhood
And the sweet dreams it brought me !

If mother woke up early,
When birds to song are given,
I pleaded, " Do not wake me,
I hear the birds in heaven."

Memories

To AN OLD JACK-TREE

I SAW thee fade, and heard thee sigh,
(While I lay fainting, it would seem),
"Who careth now how soon I die?"—
Thank God, dear jack-tree, 'twas a dream.

Could I survive thee, jack-tree dear?
Nay, thou art one of many trees
That all grow dearer year by year,
Bringing to mind sweet memories.

What though of thy fruit I never ate,
Or in thy branches never played—
Yea, thou wert sterile e'er and straight—
All day I sported in thy shade.

And first to thee the birds would come
And watch the cage with fowling-lead,
And from thyself I got the gum—
Poor jack-tree, how I made thee bleed!

Indeed, I would not have thee die;
And thou art tall enough to see
The hill where I unmourned shall lie—
And *then* wilt surely mourn for me!

The Desterrado

SPRING

ALL yesternight I'd dreams of the days departed,
 Rambling on the hills, a happy boy ;
Yet somehow, somehow I was heavy-hearted,
 Felt a something secret mar my joy ;
And this wet pillow proves that I have wept,
Wept bitter tears and long the while I slept.

Among the scarlet flowers of silk cotton scattered,
 Sipping the sweet juice at their sweet will,
In what good fellowship the statlings chattered,
 Even with the crows, on vale and hill,
While gaily, gaily did the greenwood ring
To songs of birds in welcome of the spring !

Again I seek the scenes of youth, not bounding,
 As I bounded once, but with slow tread ;
There's not a tree, nor bush nor bower, surround-
 ing

 But it wakens memories of the dead,
Of him whose fiery spirit flung the spark,
Kindling the kindled soul that burns yet—in the
 dark.

Had God in mercy so permitted, left me
 Choice of heaven against one earth's desire,
In sooth had I of the joys of heaven bereft me
 For the joy of rambling with my sire—
With none but him whose like I shall not see—
Upon my native hills eternally !

Memories

MY GARDEN

In my garden of love
Very few were the flowers,
Yet grateful was I
To the Great Ones above,
The flowers were so fair.
But They needed a rose—
The Great Ones above—
In Their garden of peace,
And ruthless They chose
My brightest and best.
I fell on my knees
Crying distraught, "Of Your love,
Pray spare me the rest!"

The Desterrado

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 Rambling on the hills, a happy boy ;
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 Felt a something secret mar my joy ;
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 Wept bitter tears and long the while I slept.

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 Sipping the sweet juice at their sweet will,
In what good fellowship the Starlings chattered,
 Even with the crows, on vale and hill,
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My brightest and best.
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Crying distraught, “ Of Your love,
Pray spare me the rest ! ”

The Desterrado

A wondrous work of art, which long
Did sore his skill defy,
Till, baffled twice, he'd now resolved
To triumph or to die !

So there he stood to test its strength :
His little orphan boy
With winsome face and light blue eyes,
Sole pledge of wedded joy,

Was clinging to his neck—poor child—
Unconscious all of harm,
The while his sire, a lighted lunt
In hand, awaited calm.

Some moments then a silence fell,
And hushed was every breath . . .
The cannon boomed—but shouts of joy
Proclaimed them saved from death !

Thereon a loud Te Deum rose
In one harmonious swell,—
The voices of the multitude
Commingling with the bell.

And there was joy among the friars
That helped the church to raise,
And that brave son of Italy
Had due reward and praise.

Memories

And long did that great vault attest—
 Intact mid ruins hoary—
The genius of the architect
 And Goa's short-lived glory !

The Desterrado

Dom Guzmão

Old Dom Guzmão, in faded frock
 Bart with a haughty brow,
Who sings beside the palace gate,
A rich fidalgo but of late,
 A poor man is he now.

Fair Dona Clara, the vicereine,
 A kind, kind lady is she ;
A lady kind to all, but most
 To folks of her own countree.

“ Who sings now there, who plays now
 there,
 So early in the day ?
He sings so sweet, he plays so sweet,
 My prayers I scarce can say ”

“ ’Tis I, senhora, Dom Guzmão,
 Your Excellency’s slave ;
Long may Your Excellency live
 To help the unhappy brave ! ”

“ You, Dom Guzmão ?—your face is
 flushed—
 I wonder what you do ;
You’ve spent, I fear, the three rupees
 I gave last week to you.

Memories

Yet three more will I give you now
If you will sing again
The best three songs of our countree,
On glory, love and pain."

And Dom Guzmão he sings the best
Three songs of his countree,
And takes his pay and goes his way--
A poor fidalgo he !

The Desterrado

THE CHOIR MASTER

NE'ER came Death into our village
 But it brought me grace ;
I would join the sad procession
 To the resting-place.

Then I heard the dear choir master,
 (Old was he and kind),
He would chant the *Miserere*,
 Brought me peace of mind.

Such the peace, at every burial,
 " May he live," said I,
" Live to chant the *Miserere*
 O'er me when I die ! "

Now that comfort 'tis denied me,—
 Wherefore, God knows best.
This sad day the good old master
 He was laid to rest !

GADFLIES

Gadflies

THE LORD OF CREATION

A HEARTY breakfast over,
Within myself content,
With all the world at peace,
Into the street I went—
The lord of creation I !

Quiet feeding on the garbage,
That in the street there lay,
Were pariah dogs, with looks
That seemed to plead and say,
" The slaves of creation we ! "

Further on, while their children
Scratched off each other's face,
Two mothers swore enough
To shame the human race—
Ladies of creation they !

I bit my tongue, and, crestfall'n
Returning the same way,
Distrust I heard the dogs
To one another say,
" The lord of creation he ! "

The Desterrado

Mrs. Bitch

In the street where live I there lives a Bitch :

I call her " My sweet darling,"

But folk around call her a spiteful witch—

All day, they say, she's snarling.

Her temper, if not sweet,

Remember my sweet darling

Was born with but two feet.

Should children in the street but run or play,

They find her barking furious ;

And neighbours come and curse and go their way—

But neighbours *are* so curious !

No wonder children hale

And hearty make her furious—

My darling hath no tail.

But let the curious folk think what they will

And curse her in full measure ;

She's neither bitch nor witch but just a *git*.

To me she's quite a treasure,

For through her, link by link,

With pleasure I can measure

How low the sex can sink !

Gadflies

THE POETS

SCENE.—*The main road of a village in Goa, sometimes called Oriental Rome.*

(*The verses in the older poet's mouth have deliberately been made monotonous so as to conform with the even manner of speaking.*)

OLDER POET.

Those lines you mentioned they are fine,
But these are better—they are mine:—
" Two bards, the same great century born,
A glorious country they adorn,
One he's beside me——"

YOUNGER POET:

Kind of you,
But, sit, " beside me " 'twere more true;
Now give us th' epic, poem, or lay
You deemed so glorious, yesterday

OLDER POET.

The lay is, in great men's estimation,
Enough to make a reputation,
'Tis worthy to be sung, though small,
In places like the Capitol,
Albeit, to please a comrade dear,
I'll sing it on a road—give ear:

" Whoso hath seen our glorious Goa,
They say, he need not see Lisboa.
Nor, I say, need he see great Rome,—
All great things they're in Goa, our home:
Bless Albuquerque's great memory,
A city as great as Rome is she."

The Desterrado

YOUNGER POET :

Glorious indeed ! I like to hear
My country praised ; I love it dear,
And wish could write—

OLDER POET :

A poem like that ?
Aha ! and give me tit for tat ?
Nay, nay, you may, I'm sure you can,
But, then, you ~~must~~ act like a man ;
Not only be ~~directly~~ inspired,
But get your heart ~~burning~~ fired !
Yes, you should love and help your kind,
And wealth or health should never mind.
That's how I wrote I those lines of mine—
Two sparks in each—humane, divine,
And that's how, too, poor I remain—
To hear it, friend, will give you pain.

YOUNGER POET :

You're rich enough to buy me, sir.

OLDER POET :

Pray, never such a thing ever,
True, God has blessed me, various ways,
For my good works—I give Him praise ;
But a large house it leaves one poor :
Build one yourself, sir, and make sure.

(*Calling out to a fisher-girl running past with a basketful of fish*)

Stop, Marianne ! Stop, Marianne ! .
What means this, Marianne, my girl ?
I called out twice, and you ran, ran ;
Well paid for naming you a girl !

Gadflies

FISHER-GIRL :

Yes, with such pearls you cheat poor girls
And ne'er a pice you give nor rice,
For months and months—you think it nice.

(Throws down some fish to the old poet and runs off.)

OLDER POET :

Ungrateful girl ! and every day
My thoughts have been to make a lay
Upon her wedding—pay her so,
And let no man or woman know :
Do good by stealth—I think it best ;
“ Let not thy left hand ”—and the rest.
Reward must come or soon or late ,
If mine came late such was my fate,
Though small sums yet to folks I owe,
But you will help a friend, I know—
Now, not another tit for tat !

YOUNGER POET :

I, sir ? I, I'm poor as a rat !

OLDER POET :

In vain have then my lectures been ;
As man, I see, you're selfish, mean ;
As poet, however hard you strain,
My heights you never shall attain !

YOUNGER POET :

I hope not !—they would make me faint ;
And who could stand them—save a saint ?

The Desterrado

AFTER THE FIRST MONSOON SHOWER

All overhead a cloudy sky,
Alone a winsome child plies augh,
A dhyl, from the topmost bough,
It cheers the peasant at the plough ;
While th' air it smells so sweet, so sweet,
 On every spray
Is seen a sparrow, or a tweet,
 A-dancing gay :
Why's not my heart a-dancing then ?—
Because of ye, ye thoughtless men !

Gadflies

PADRE JOSÉ MAREE

THE picture above that you see
Is of Padre José Maree,

A padre renowned
In the country all round,
As a padre can be,
For his battered berretta,
His tattered old cassock
And nieces three.

Where'er there's the chance of a fee,
Of good cheer, or of e'en a biree,—

Be it a death and prayer,
Or a church feast and fair,—
There the padre you see,
See him eating or smoking,
If not making the dots
For his nieces three.

The Desterrado

AN OLD LESSON

A GOODLY sight it was—
The field of waving corn—
And ripe enough to reap
Upon the morrow morn.
He'd paid their dues to them
That helped the field to sow,
And given due praise to Him
That made the corn to grow,
Had vowed (not all in vain)
To keep himself from sin,
His cares now over, the corn
Would soon be garnered in
A good man he, that owned
The field, as all could tell;
Not like that heartless wretch—
His field had fared as well!
He could not understand,
He could not help but grieve,
And sad he homewards went.
Alas, that self-same eve
A swarm of locusts came—
In haste they came, in haste:
They spared the bad man's field
And laid the good man's waste!

Gadflies

BIRDS AND NEIGHBOURS

WHEN I was young and went all day
Bird's-nesting, oft would neighbours say,
" The birds will be his ruin."

"Tis not with age my hairs are gray,
And well the birds might turn and say,
" 'Tis all his neighbours' doing."

The Desterrado

PRAYERS

I BLESSED the mom
When he was born,
And, kneeling down
Where I had stood,
Did pray the gods
To make him good.

Enough, enough!
Perhaps they laugh
To see me writh
With agony:
Who knows, who knows
What like gods be?

Gadflies

BEFORE A CROSS

This cross, dear Jesus, Thou didst carry
All the way to Calvary,
And at the sight not all were heartless—
Some good women pitied Thee ;
A long while, for Thy love, I bore it,
Yet who, who ever pitied me ?

When dying they mocked Thee, dead they
speared Thee—
All were strangers, loit'ring tugh ;
I'm speared alive and by no strangers,
Though faint unto death I lie :
Good Jesus, take Thy cross, good Jesus—
Take Thy cross and let me die !

The Desterrado

THE SCOURGING

EYES filled with tears
The child reads on.
"They had Him scourged
Until He bled. . . .
They placed a crown—
A crown of thom—
Upon His head."
The sire kneels down
And blesses God
That child was born.
* * *

An old man prays
Before a shrine;
Resigned he says,
"Thy will be done,
Thy will, not ~~mine~~."
A lash in hand,
Behold the son!
He'll scourge his sire—
"Oh curse your God!" . . .
Retire, retire!

Gadflies

CARPE DIEM

ENOUGH, my heart,
No more will I obey thee ;
We two shall part
Lest I in cold blood slay thee

What mean these dreams ?
The end is sure disaster ,
The best, me-seems,
Is reason, for a master

I'll take the plough,
And take no thought of morrow ;
So part we now—
Away with dreams and sorrow !

Says poor dear heart,
" Obey or disobey me,
I cannot part ,
Come, then, in cold blood slay me ! "

BUTTERFLIES

BUTTERFLIES

The Desterrado

ANOTHER Hour

ANOTHER hour, Gray Eyes,
And then farewell
A smile from thee once, Gray Eyes,
Could raise me to the skies,
Could tongue now tell
How crushed my poor heart lies ?
Who crushed it, cruel Gray Eyes ?—
Yet fare thee well !

Butterflies

LAST WORDS

I AM sorry, Gray Eyes,
We'll meet not again,
And thy tears and sighs
(Be still, O my heart !)
Are in vain, all in vain—
For never, Gray Eyes,
Will I see thee again !

The Desterrado

BUTTERFLIES

BEAUTIFUL butterflies
All flutt'ring so gay,
And I feasting mine eyes
As joyful as they !
Till you came on the scene—
You haunting Gray Eyes—
You came in between
And chased them away,—
My poor butterflies
You chased them away,
Oh you cruel Gray Eyes !

Butterflies

KATE

We might have wed, sweet Kate and I,
And lived and died together;
Had not our love it made us shy,
We might have wed, sweet Kate and I;
In vain now lone I sit and sigh
All through the wintry weather
We might have wed, sweet Kate and I,
And lived and died together.

The Desterrado

MY LOVE

He—My love's a peasant girl,
 Yet full of queenly grace:
When first I came across her
 She was a-making hay,
 And round her pretty face
Was tied a kerchief gay.

She—My love's a high-born lad,
 But with a kindly heart:
Would that I ne'er had seen him!
 I know his folk upbraid
 And say, “A fool thou art
To wed a peasant maid.”

He—Thus morn I passed her hut.
 She turned her head away;
And near by, from a jack-tree,
 The bird that loveth me
 I heard it sing and say,
 “ This maid she's meant for thee ! ”

Butterflies

FALSE LOVE.

Too late in life came Love my way—
“ You never wished to meet me ! ”
She whispered soft, “ though every day
You read of me and every night
You dreamed, till now your hairs are white.”—
“ Yea, fearing you might cheat me.”

At this so sweet the fair one smiled,
At once said I, “ Forgive me ! ”
A child at heart I was beguiled—
Her smile was mine undoing—methought,
Though hard against it reason fought,
Maybe she'll not deceive me

And through the garden we two went,
Plucking the roses gaily,
Still something said, “ You'll yet lament , ”
And right enough (as I did fear)
The false one left me soon—and here
Am I, lamenting daily.

The Desterrado

WHEN SOMEBODY LOVED ME

WHEN somebody loved me
The world was all fair,
And I felt no care:
How gay the birds sung,
How soft the bells rung,
Bidding folks to prayer,
When somebody loved me!

Now that nobody loves me
The world it is drear,
And I live without cheer.
All sad the birds sing,
And the church bells ring
Like a dirge to mine ear,
Now that nobody loves me!

THE OLIVE GROVE

The Olive Grove

VENITE, ADORATEMUS

Babe of Bethlehem,
We're children from the Foundling Home
Come joyful to adore Thee :
Gifts we have none, but take our hearts,—
We lay our hearts before Thee.

Babe of Bethlehem,
We held a lantern in the dark
And cried, " Behold the Star !
Come let us hasten, as they did,—
The kings that came from far."

Babe of Bethlehem,
We find Thee, lo, in a poor shed,
(They found us on the street)
Yet art Thou happy, so are we,—
And kiss Thy little feet.

The Desterrado

THE MANGO

The child would none but the best mango,
Was juicy both and sweet ;
The beggar bought the fruit, and smiled
To see his dear son eat :
I wished I were that happy child
Eating the mango sweet.

The father watched him eat the mango,
His face aglow with love ;
Then wiped the mouth of his dear boy,
And thanked the gods above :
Sweeter, I thought, the father's joy
Drinking that cup of love.

The Desterrado

And stood with downcast looks and sad.
'Twas more than I could bear :
Their sadness smote me, " Yea, throw stones
At others an you dare ! "

I sate a while, a restless guest,
And looked upon the scene :
By the shed stood two wild fig trees,
One side a patch of green ;

Behind, a hill where cattle grazed—
And thoughts of Abraham
Came to my mind, and to my heart
A sense of blessed calm !

The Olive Grove

MY FRIENDS

My friends are more than I can tell ;
I give here only three.

The first he blows the bugle well,
A bugle master he.

I meet him each and every day
Where they the bugles blow ;
He brings his child and makes him say,
" Big saib, how far you go ? "

The child, now comely to my mind,
Was otherwise before ;
And somehow day by day, I find,
I like the urchin more.

Another friend, and very dear,
With a tray large and round,
He sits and sweetmeats sells, anear
Saint Mary's Church compound.

With *laddoos* for my child, one day,
After me did he run ;
I took the *laddoos*,—naught did pay,
Rememb'ring Mary's Son

The third of friends (you'll scarce believe)
Though lame I love him best ;
Nay, should he fail to come one eve,
My heart it hath no rest.

The Olive Grove

ON RE-READING BURNS

(By the Charlotte Lake, Matheran, India)

"Tis well they know not lust of pelf or fame
Who dwell in yonder peaceful glen,
Far from the wicked haunts of men,
And well for Scotland's glory and her name
Had been, and for thy weal and peace of mind,
Thou pride and shame at once of human kind,
An thou hadst shunned the tempting, fateful
glare
That lured thee from the bonny banks of Ayr !

The Olive Grove

A MORNING RAMBLE

WHAT would you, heart ?
If on our way a bird but chirped,
With eyes all opened wide
You stopped to hear—and cried,
If on our way a bird but chirped :
Dear heart, poor heart,
You're never satisfied.

What would you, heart ?
When on our face the fresh air blew,
You liked it well, and tried
To rest content—and sighed,
When on our face the fresh air blew .
Dear heart, poor heart,
You're never satisfied.

How strange you are !
When a sweet lime the woman gave
Saying, " Take this for your child,"
You smiled (you had not smiled)
When a sweet lime the woman gave :
Yea, you were satisfied—
Alas, I it was that sighed !

The Olive Grove

THE HYMN

As we three left the village
We heard some children sing
A hymn to Blessed Mary
And the small church bell ring.
" Stay, stay, stay but a while,"
My heart said with a smile ;
But Fate she would not stay,
And dragged us both away.

Praise be to Blessed Mary !
Across the hills and seas
The hymn it followed us ;
And now, on every breeze,
My heart and I can hear
Its cadence just as clear :
We laugh at Fate and say,
" Come drag the hymn away."

The Desterrado

To A BEATA *

I WOULD thou took'st some other way ;
'Tis hard on me, and every day ;
Little thou know'st the sight of thee,
Poor Beata, how it tortures me !
Thy life is all a winter drear—
From day to day, from year to year,
'Tis one dull round of toil and prayer,
Thy mother dead, he will not heed,
Thy greedy sire, e'en if thou bleed :
How hard a fate, and thou so fair !

Thy sins confessed, I saw thee pale
And trembling all put down thy veil ,
What bitter anguish must have tore
Thy bosom !—ah, temptation sore,
And all around an arid waste,
Yet that one draught thou wilt not taste,
Though thirsty unto death thou be ;
So dear to thee thy virgin vows,
And dear the honour of thy house, . . .
And better death than infamy !

Next week thy brother brings a bride,
To a house that well hath kept its pride—
Oh, at what cost to thee who cares ?
That wretch with sanctimonious airs ?

* In Goa certain well-to-do families keep a beata (unmarried daughter) on the place that otherwise the house does not prosper

The Olive Grove

And thou must give her welcome, nay,
With words will break thy heart to say,
Thyself must show the bridal bed,
The bed where *thou* shalt never lie
For all thy prayers to the Most High—
Ai, better, better thou wert dead !

The Desterrado

A WILD FLOWER

Quite an hour
I was looking at it—
The range of bare hills—
But thinking of Him,
Quite an hour.

All the while
It was looking at me—
The tiny wild flower :
Was it thinking of Him,
All that while ?

With a smile
Our eyes met ;
I left thinking of Him :
Was He looking at us ?
I think of it yet,
I think of it yet.

The Olive Grove

THE OLD MAN OF PIRENE

By the fountain of Pirene

There was an old man praying ;
Night and day, and on his knees,
For ever he was saying,
" For my sake, forgive them, Lord—
They know not what they do."

White his beard and long, so long,
Was on the green grass growing ,
As the fountain so his tears
For ever they were flowing.

There no beast, however wild,
Would growl, no bird would sing ,
Quiet they quenched their thirst and seemed
To say, " What a sad thing ! "

When alive, oft went I there,
And could not help but pray ;
Donkeys, too, they had been seen
To kneel beside and bray.

From my grave I hear him now,
Can hear the same sad call :
Friends, for mercy, let him know
'Tis useless, useless all !

The Desterrado

ROBIN REDBREAST

I know not, birdie,
What like thou art ;
The poets all praise thee
And touch my heart.

And never shall know it !
So tame and good ;
With leaves, too, covered
The babes in the wood.

Have patience, old man,
God hears thy prayer ;
The bird will greet thee,
The first thing *then* !

The Olive Grove

THE SONG

THERE's a song in my heart enshrined,
Should ever my lips fit words find,
All the nations would, for all time,
Abide by that song sublime,
And man unto man would be
As in heaven they yearn to see.

Ev'ry night, when the nights are long,
I dream that I sing this song,
And see all ye, dear brothers mine,
Listen rapt to the words divine,
Till there pass a thrill through the spheres—
When ye tremble, and burst into tears !

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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SOME PRESS OPINIONS

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